



500,000 YEARS AGO THE EARTH OPENED

Cracking and sputtering, it released liquid rock and rivers of fire across the landscape. Intermittent eruptions over thousands of years layered the land, leaving intricate caves, cones, craters, and black, jagged blankets of lava. The Modoc called this “the land of burnt-out fires.” Tule Lake and Lava Beds were then, and are today, the center of their world.

Lava Beds National Monument protects a variety of well-preserved geologic features, including lava tube caves (*above left*) and Gillem Bluff (*above, in the distance*).

This can be a forbidding place, a world foreign to outsiders. The Modoc and their ancestors lived in this rugged land for over 10,000 years. Following the rhythms of nature, they moved freely across their homeland until they were forcibly removed.

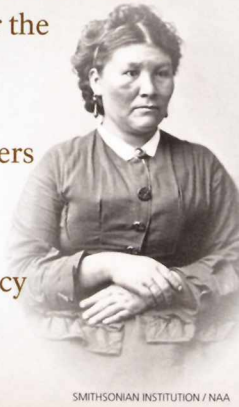
consistently requested a reservation in their homeland. Poor conditions and disagreements with other Tribes on the reservation convinced some Modoc to return home. Broken promises, bitter resentments, and distrust made negotiations tenuous.

The blazing of the Applegate Trail through the heart of Modoc territory in the 1840s marked a dramatic change in the traditional Modoc way of life. Increasing numbers of White settlers claimed ancestral Modoc land but, for the most part, the newcomers were able to live in harmony with the original inhabitants. By the 1860s, however, a new influx of venture capitalists demanded area Tribes be moved to the Klamath Reservation in Oregon. The Modoc reluctantly signed a treaty but

The Modoc War began on November 29, 1872, when troops from Fort Klamath tried to force the Modoc back to the reservation. They fled to the natural fortress of the lava beds, to what is today called “Captain Jacks Stronghold” (*far right*). After the US Army suffered a major defeat by the Modocs, peace talks began. Toby Riddle (*right*), a Modoc woman married to White settler Frank Riddle, served as an interpreter between the Modoc and the Army. Kientpoos (Captain Jack) wanted

his people to be allowed to stay in their homeland. He also wanted peace. Modoc society ruled by consensus. Remembering the 1852 slaughter of 30 members of their Tribe, a majority voted to eliminate the peace commissioners. On April 11, 1873, peace commissioners Gen. Edward Canby and Rev. Eleazar Thomas were killed. Gen. William T. Sherman soon called for the “utter extermination” of the Modoc.

For six months, 1,000 troops and volunteers fought to capture fewer than 60 Modoc warriors and their families. Those who resisted were exiled to the Quapaw Agency in Oklahoma, where their descendants continue to thrive as the Modoc Nation.



Captain Jacks Stronghold
NPS
Modoc leader Kientpoos (*above right*), called Captain Jack by settlers, refused to accept the poor conditions on the reservation. He felt by returning to their homeland,

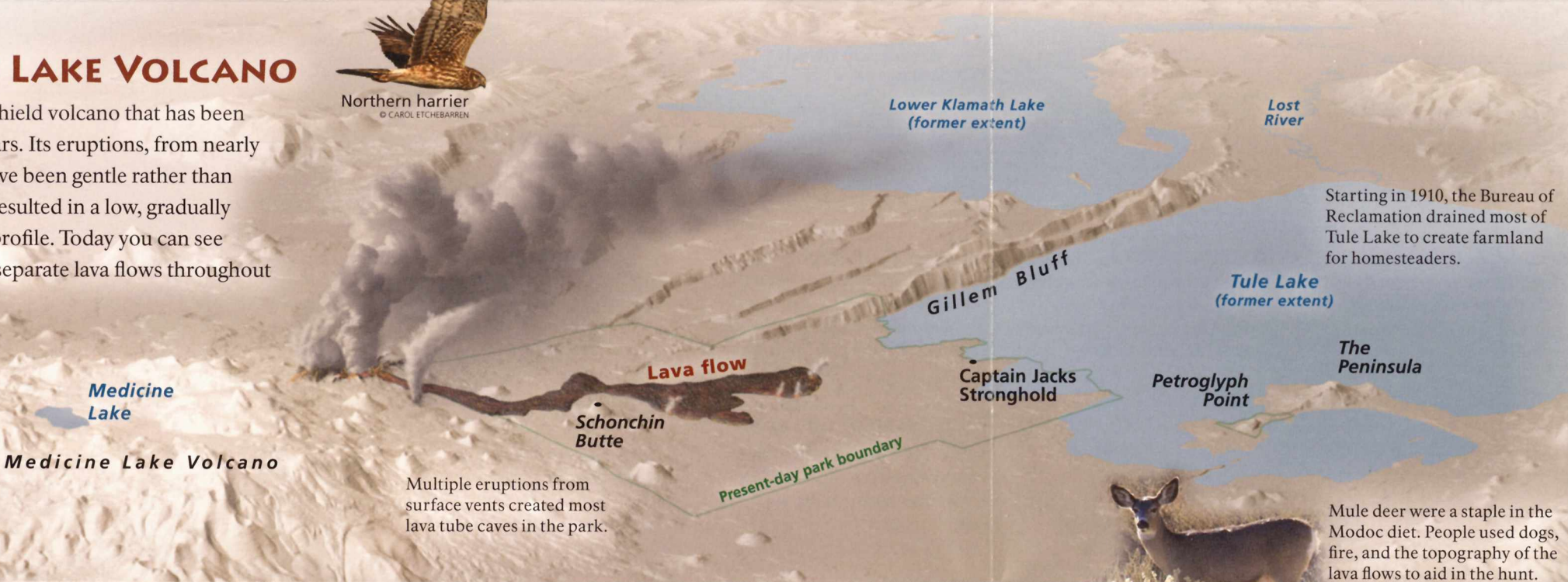
his people could have a good life. Kientpoos surrendered on June 1 and was later hanged with three others.

MEDICINE LAKE VOLCANO

Medicine Lake is a shield volcano that has been active for 500,000 years. Its eruptions, from nearly 520 surface vents, have been gentle rather than explosive. This has resulted in a low, gradually sloping, shield-like profile. Today you can see evidence of over 30 separate lava flows throughout the park.



Northern harrier
© CAROL ETCHEBARRIN



Starting in 1910, the Bureau of Reclamation drained most of Tule Lake to create farmland for homesteaders.

Mule deer were a staple in the Modoc diet. People used dogs, fire, and the topography of the lava flows to aid in the hunt.

LAND OF BURNT-OUT FIRES

Modoc life and culture were perfectly tuned to this environment and the richness of the resources it provided. People lived in semipermanent winter villages along Lost River and Tule Lake. Each year as winter turned to spring, they began a seasonal round of fishing, hunting, and gathering. The ragged

and rough terrain of the lava flows could be dangerous, but it provided bounty in the hunt and challenged those seeking power and knowledge through spiritual quests. To the Modoc it is a sacred landscape.

Usually not seen in the high desert, ferns can be found in cave entrances.

FROM LAVA TUBES TO CAVES

Eruptions 30,000 to 40,000 years ago formed over 900 lava tube caves found in the park. Lava tubes form when streams of hot, flowing lava start to cool. The center of the stream stays hot and continues to flow as the outside begins to cool and harden. The hot lava drains out, leaving a pipe-shaped cave. Multiple eruptions can stack caves on top of one another, creating multilevel caves. When a lava tube ceiling collapses, it opens access to the cave below.



Lava tube in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, 1972
LEWIS / HOLLAND



Melissa blue butterfly
© ROB SANTRY



Leanira checkerspot butterfly
© ROB SANTRY



Wyoming Indian paintbrush
NPS

American pika
© FLECKER / ADITTITHESTARGAZER

Scabland fleabane
NPS / JESSE BARDEN

Fragile fern
NPS / KATRINA SMITH

Western blue flax
NPS

Rock wren
NPS / NICCO RAMIREZ

Yellow pond-lily
WIKIMEDIA COMMONS / H. ZELL

Threadleaf phacelia
NPS

Make the Most of Your Visit to Lava Beds

Established in 1925, Lava Beds National Monument protects and interprets this volcanic land, its early human occupation, and the Modoc defense of their homeland. Learn about activities and trails at the visitor center. Use the official NPS App to guide your visit; download the park to use offline.

Road Closures Some roads outside the park close in winter and early spring. Call 530-667-8113 to check road closures.

Fees Lava Beds collects fees from visitors who use the park. Recreation fees are used to enhance visitor experiences.

Services The visitor center bookstore has snacks, ice, flashlights, helmets, videos, batteries, books, and souvenirs.

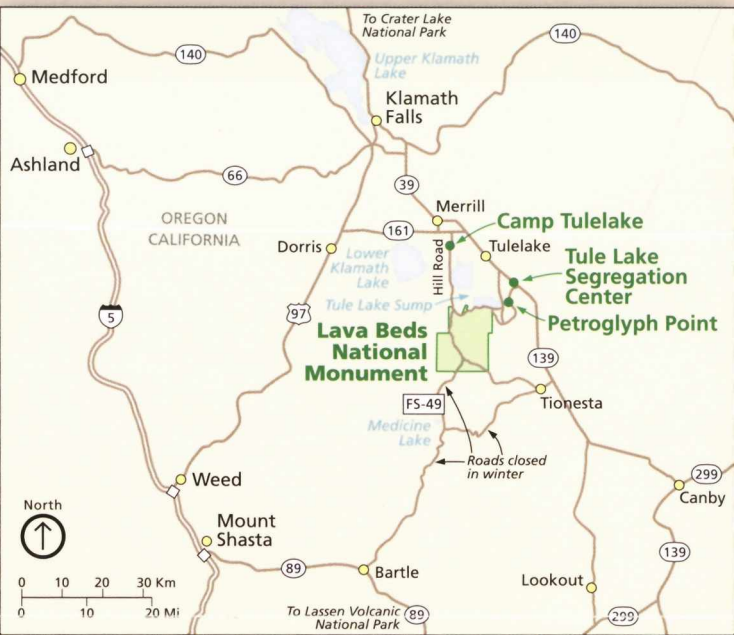
Gas, firewood, restaurants, and showers are available in nearby Tulelake, CA; Merrill, OR; and Klamath Falls, OR (20–50 miles from the visitor center).

Accessibility We strive to make facilities and programs accessible to all. For information go to the visitor center, call, or check the park website.

Firearms For firearms regulations check the park website or ask a park ranger.

More Information
Lava Beds National Monument
PO Box 1240
1 Indian Well HQ
Tulelake, CA 96134
530-667-8113
www.nps.gov/labe

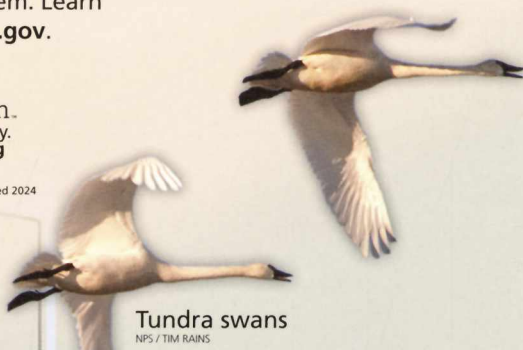
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Learn About National Parks
Lava Beds National Monument is one of over 430 parks in the National Park System. Learn more at www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation.
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

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TULE LAKE NATIONAL
WILDLIFE REFUGE

TULE LAKE SUMP

Tule Lake
Segregation
Center

THE PENINSULA/
CASTLE ROCK

Petroglyph
Point

Petroglyph
Point Trail

Most petroglyphs in the park, like those below, are at Petroglyph Point. Their meaning remains a mystery to us today. Do not touch petroglyphs.



© RON WOLF

EXPLORING ABOVE GROUND

Highlights of the many things to do at Lava Beds include:

Mammoth Crater Impressive 36,000-year-old vents created lava tube caves in the area.

Symbol Bridge / Big Painted Cave Visit prehistoric pictographs and rock art.

Schonchin Butte Hike the trail to a fire lookout built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Fleener Chimneys Globes of lava created these volcanic vents and spatter cones.

Thomas-Wright Battlefield See the site of a decisive Modoc victory over the US Army.

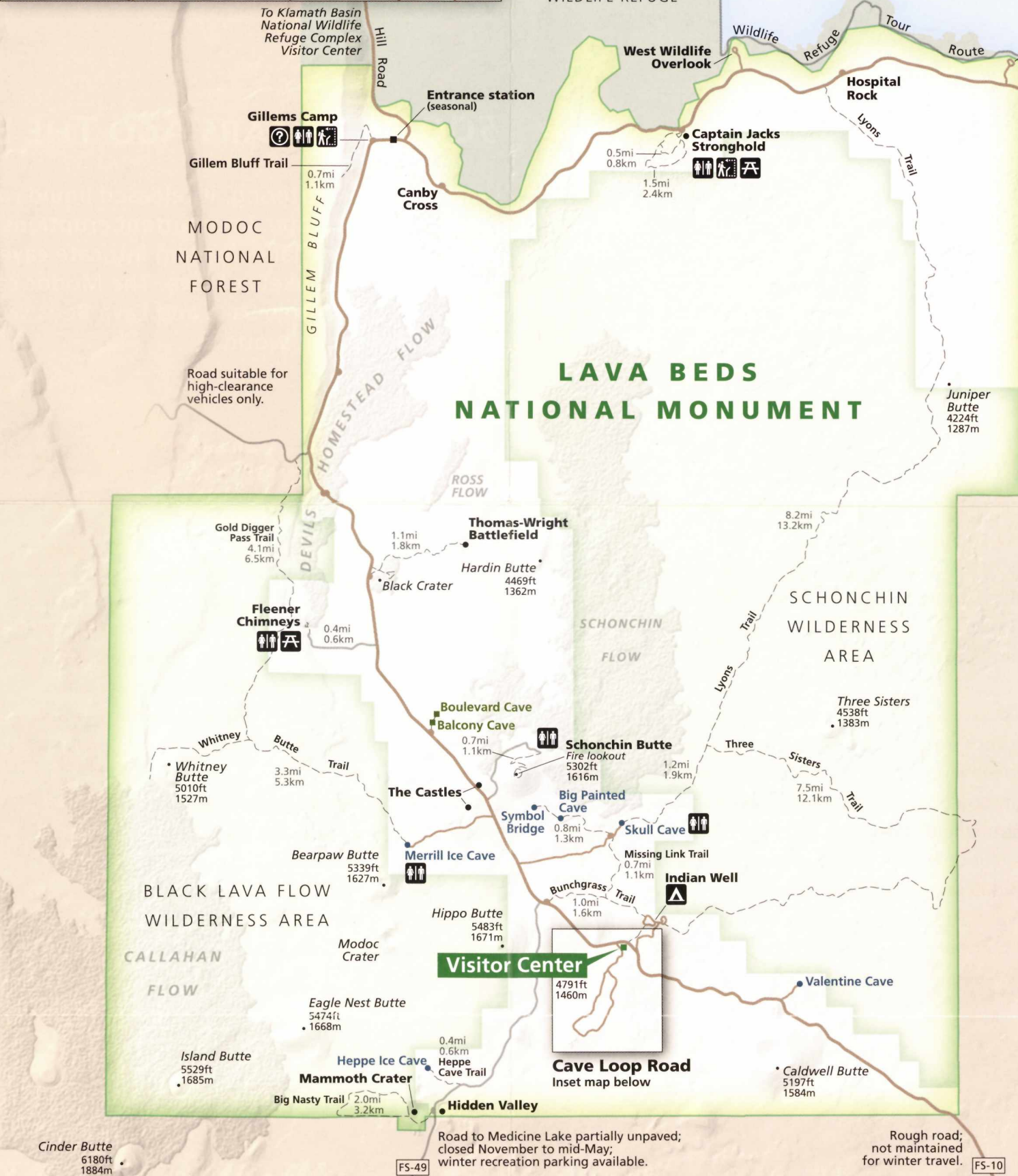
Gillems Camp / Gillem Bluff Hike to a great view of this volcanic landscape.

Captain Jacks Stronghold Explore where Modoc families took refuge as they fought for their homeland.

Wildlife Overlooks Stop to view waterfowl on Tule Lake.

Petroglyph Point This former island with carvings up to 1,500 years old is significant to Native people.

Wilderness 28,460 acres of Lava Beds National Monument is managed as wilderness. Wilderness preserves large and relatively undeveloped landscapes for ecological, social, and cultural benefits. Learn more at www.nps.gov/wilderness.



MODOC
NATIONAL FOREST

SCHONCHIN
WILDERNESS
AREA

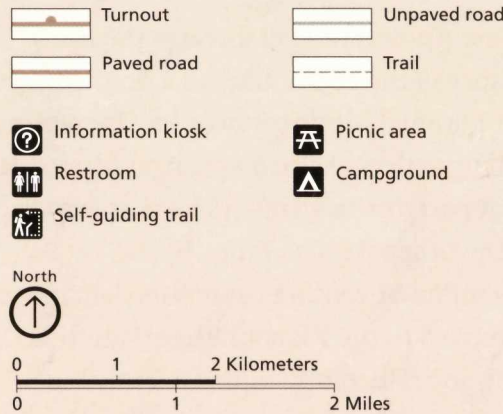
BLACK LAVA FLOW
WILDERNESS AREA
CALLAHAN
FLOW



Smoothstem blazingstar

Schonchin Butte Trail

© RAY BOURNIGHT



EXPLORING THE CAVES

Before entering a cave, you must get a permit at the visitor center or fee booth. Stop at the visitor center for screening and information and to talk to a ranger about the caves.

Many of the 900-plus caves have steep entry points, rocky trails, and in some cases very low ceilings. Over two dozen caves have developed entrances and trails. They vary in difficulty, length, and complexity (right).

Least Challenging

These caves have relatively high ceilings and smoother floors or trails. Safety gear is recommended.

Moderately Challenging

These caves involve stooping through low sections and have rough floors. Additional safety gear is recommended.

Most Challenging

These caves have sections that require crawling. Using all recommended safety gear will help protect you from injury.

CAVE SAFELY

Wear Protective Clothing

Caves are about 55°F (13°C) year-round, but caves with ice are colder. Wear long sleeves, pants, and closed-toe shoes. Helmets, gloves, and kneepads are recommended in caves that are moderately and most challenging.

Protect Your Head Wear a helmet in all caves. Bump hats are sold at the visitor center.

Do Not Go Alone Choose caves suitable for everyone in your group. Do not push beyond anyone's limits.

Know Your Route Observe your surroundings. Be aware of junctions and landmarks. Cave map books are available to buy at the visitor center. Tell someone where you are going.

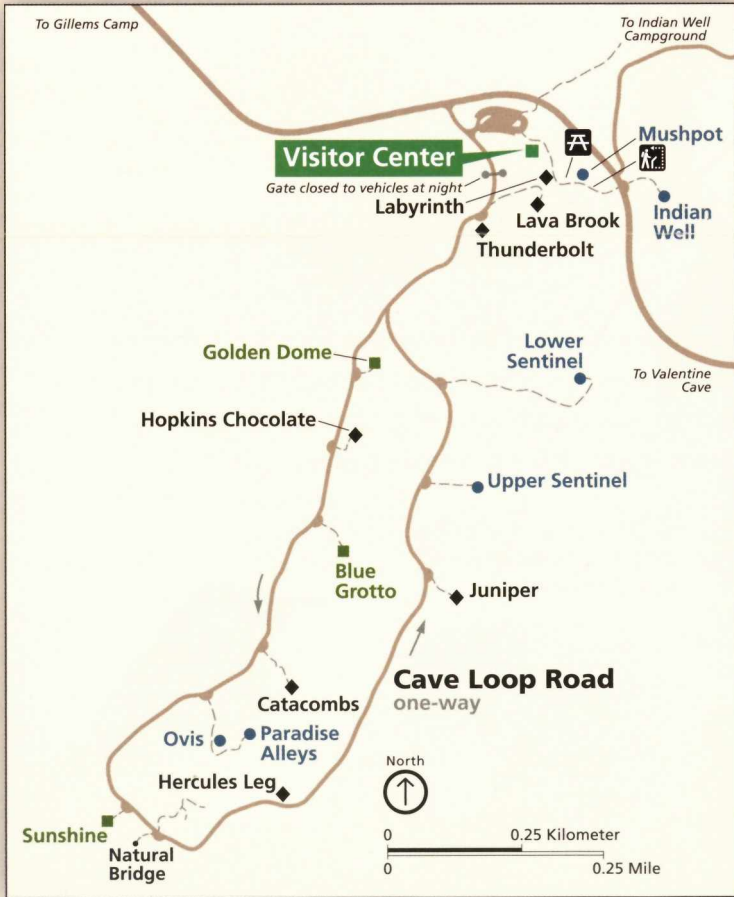
Bring Enough Light

Each person should carry at least one flashlight with extra batteries. Flashlights are loaned free of charge at the visitor center.

CAVE SOFTLY

- Caves are amazing, fragile environments. Please take only pictures and leave only footprints. Leave no trace.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke, or leave trash in caves.
- Move slowly and carefully.
- Do not use caves as bathrooms.

- Stay on the trails.
- Do not touch cultural artifacts, paintings, cave formations, or gold and silver microbial mats.
- Use electric flashlights, not carbide or gas lamps.
- Do not disturb any cave life.
- Pets are prohibited in caves.



HELP PROTECT OUR BATS

Get a Permit If you plan to enter any cave in Lava Beds National Monument, stop first at the visitor center or fee booth to get a permit.

Display your pass in your windshield to show you have been through the screening

process and are helping protect the bats that live here.

If your gear has been used in caves or mines in the United States, Canada, or Europe, please leave it at home or in your car. If used, this gear must be properly decontaminated.



Townsend's big-eared bat

White-Nose Syndrome Since 2006 bats in the United States and Canada have been dying in unprecedented numbers from white-nose syndrome. This fatal condition is associated with

exposure to a fungus people can spread to caves, mines, and other bat roost sites. Please help us protect bats and prevent the spread of this devastating disease.



Golden Dome Cave



Catcombs



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